

CalWORKs Bulletin

June 12, 1998

California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs

Issue 3

Screening For Alcoholism and Drug Dependence

The following excerpt is from a September 1997 Legal Action Center publication entitled ***Making Welfare Reform Work: Tools for Confronting Alcohol and Drug Problems Among Welfare Recipients.***

A variety of tests - from short and self-administered, to long and clinician-administered - have been developed for screening individuals for alcoholism and drug dependence. Most have been tested extensively for their validity and can identify alcohol and drug problems in nearly all cases.

One of the simplest alcoholism screening tools is the "CAGE", which consists of the following four questions:

1. Have you ever felt you should **C**ut down on your drinking?
2. Have people **A**nnoyed you by criticizing your drinking?
3. Have you ever felt bad or **G**uilty about your drinking?
4. Have you ever had a drink first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or get rid of a hangover (an "Eye opener")?

Because of its simplicity, this test could be relatively easily integrated into the standard welfare intake process and administered by a welfare eligibility worker. It has been demonstrated to detect alcoholism in nine out of 10 cases. Individuals who answer "yes" to any of these questions can then be referred for further assessment.

Other commonly used screening tools include:

- Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Inventory (SASSI)
- Short Michigan Alcoholism Screening Test (SMAST)
- Addiction Severity Index (ASI)

Information about screening tools and other assessment instruments, including ***"Simple Screening Instruments for Outreach for Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse and Infectious Diseases"*** published by the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, is available from:

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI)
P.O. Box 2345
Rockville, Maryland 20852
1-800-729-6686

Q's and A's

Q: *Can TANF funds be used to purchase vans for transportation needs of CalWORKs clients?*

A: Yes.

Q: *Is the non-custodial parent eligible for TANF services, under the welfare-to-work block grant funds (funds allocated to the Private Industry Councils), in a child-only TANF case?*

A: No. According to Federal statute, non-custodial parents of child-only TANF cases cannot meet the eligibility requirements because the custodial parent must be a TANF recipient.

Welfare-to-Work Grant Update

For information on the solicitation for proposals for the Governor's 15% special project funds (approximately \$23 million), contact the Employment Development Department Job Training Partnership Division at FAX (916) 653-2467 or visit the World Wide Web site:
<http://www.edd.cahwnet.gov/empran.htm>.

The deadline for submittal of proposals is Close of Business July 17, 1998.

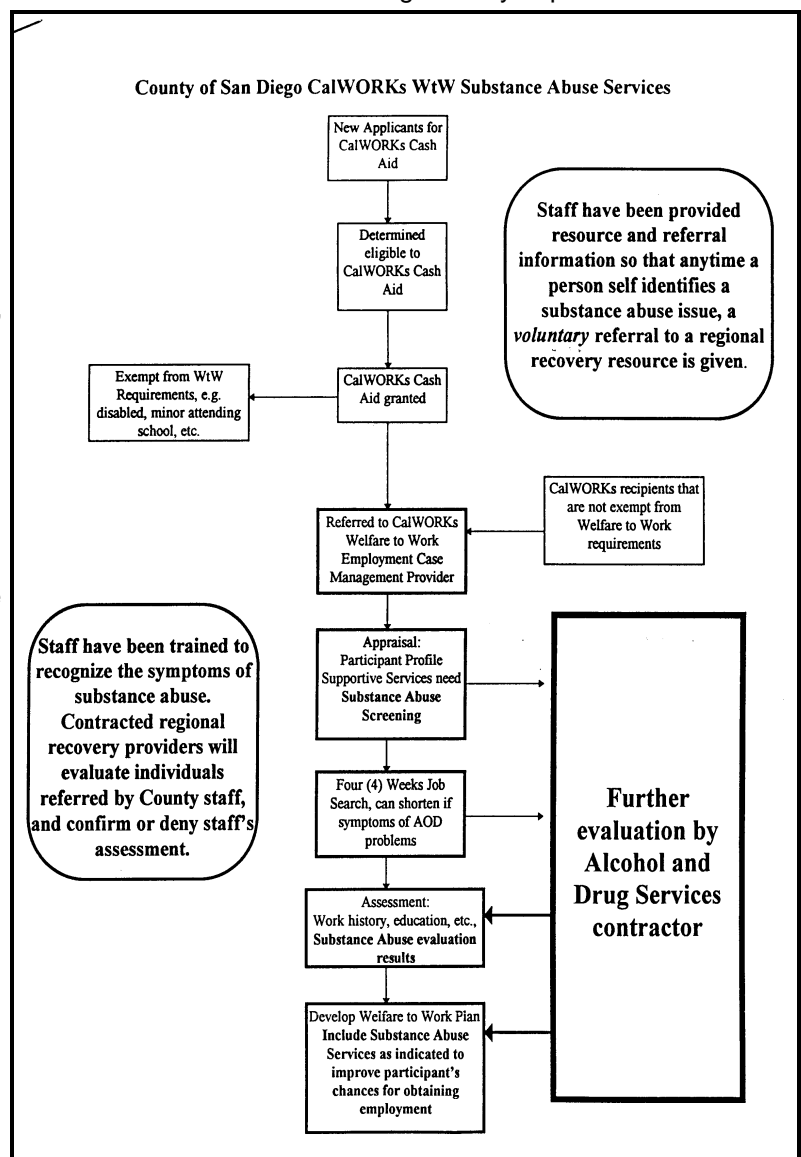
San Diego County CalWORKs Substance Abuse Services

San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) is the single agency in San Diego county administering welfare, substance abuse and mental health services. Using an array of services (or continuum of care) approach, services are available on a regional basis throughout the county. The HHS Alcohol and Drug Services (ADS) will be providing substance abuse evaluation and treatment services to the county's CalWORKs recipients through contracts with community-based organizations. Recipients will be referred to a Regional Recovery Center (RRC) for an array of family-focused services. There are nine RRCs throughout the county.

A brief description of the process for a CalWORKs recipient to enter substance abuse treatment follows and is depicted in the flowchart below. Once an applicant is determined eligible for CalWORKs, he/she is referred to an Employment Case Manager (ECM) for an appraisal. The ECM will administer the SSI (Simple Screening Instrument) to every recipient during the appraisal to determine if substance abuse is a barrier to gainful employment. If appropriate, the recipient will be referred for a comprehensive substance abuse evaluation. The ASI (Addiction Severity Index) is the standard assessment instrument which will be utilized in San Diego county to provide that evaluation. If, as a result of the ADS evaluation, it is determined that the recipient needs substance abuse treatment to become employable, this is communicated to the ECM for inclusion in the recipient's welfare to work plan. The recipient is subsequently referred to an RRC or most appropriate treatment program for their substance abuse treatment needs. If the recipient's score on the SSI does not indicate substance abuse problems and is not referred to treatment, however, shows symptoms of AOD problems at a later point in their employment activities, they will be referred at that time to an RRC for an evaluation and possible referral to substance abuse treatment.

Some of the elements of San Diego County's CalWORKs program are:

- Approximately 30,000 current recipients must be enrolled in CalWORKs by 12-31-98.
- The ECMs provide for the transportation and child care needs of CalWORKs recipients.
- The ECM function will be contracted out to private companies in four of the county's six regions. This will generate innovative and creative employment strategies.
- Collaboration at the staff level is considered important to the success of the program and is encouraged. Monthly meetings between the ECMs and ADS providers are conducted to facilitate issue resolution and ongoing education for both welfare and alcohol and drug services.
- Assessing training needs is ongoing.



For more information or questions on San Diego County's CalWORKs Program, contact Jessie Furrer, ADS CalWORKs Coordinator at (619) 692-5749.